



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-316-3000

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

Minutes 9/13/2012

Capital Planning Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2012

In attendance were:

Steve Andrew
Andrew Flanagan
Charles Foscett
Paul Olsen
Brian Rehrig
Diane Johnson
Ruth Lewis *
Anthony Lionetta
Barbara Thornton

* Denotes those not in attendance

- Meeting Opened: Capital Planning for FY 2014 begins! Charlie Foscett opened the meeting and introduced Andrew Flanagan, the new Deputy Town Manager, who will serve as the Town Manager's Designee on the CPC. Also, Paul Olsen is officially a member of the CPC as the Treasurer Designee. Andrew Flanagan distributed information packets to CPC members.
- Election of Officers and Other Business: Andrew Flanagan presided over the election of officers for FY 2014. The CPC voted unanimously as follows: Charlie Foscett as Chair, Paul Olsen as Vice Chair and Tony Lionetta as Secretary. The proposed schedule for CPC meetings was reviewed. While there are some conflicts with individual schedules, the decision was made to go forward with the overall schedule as prepared by Andrew Flanagan. Subcommittee assignments were reviewed and remain unchanged from last year.
- Review of Approved FY 2013 CP: A key issue raised was the significant increase in the projected cost for the renovation of the Central Fire Station. The latest estimate by the Project Architect is now about \$6.1 million in addition to the \$1.25 million already spent on the exterior. This totals \$7.35 million as compared to the \$4.4 million previously projected. (It was noted that the exterior project was completed for \$300k less than estimated.) This kind of increase seems excessive and Andrew Flanagan is to request a written explanation (one or two pages) from the Architect. This should just be more than stating square foot costs.

Diane Johnson and Brian Rehrig were asked to review the situation after receipt of this written explanation. A question to be evaluated is how much of this increase is related to programmatic changes associated with moving the Chief's office and staff to the Central Fire Station.

- Sale of Crosby School: Andrew Flanagan reported that the sale of the Crosby School has been completed. It was sold to "School for Children" for \$2,875,000. As required by law the sale of a capital asset must be used to offset the cost of another capital asset. In this case, the funds will be used, as planned, to reduce the non-exempt expenditures otherwise required for the Thompson School.

- **Thompson School Borrowing Plan:** There was discussion on a proposal by the Treasurer to go for a 15 year bond instead of a 20 year bond, as originally planned. After much debate about the pros and cons, a vote was taken on a resolution to be provided to the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen. A resolution recommending a 20 year bond period was passed 7 to 1. While the 15 year period would theoretically reduce the overall cost to the Town, it would increase the annual payments by about \$40k. This, in turn, would put added constraint on the Capital Plan and affect its ability to fund other needs going forward. Also, it was felt that the current cost of money being so low makes it attractive to go with the longer 20 year period.
- **Reallocating Funds:** Andrew Flanagan reported that four departments have submitted written requests to re-assign previously approved and/or now residual funds to other needs. These Departments include Health and Human Services (Water Problem), Library (Parking Lot Paving), Planning and Community Development (Air Conditioning Stack) and Public Works (Street Sweeper). Individual votes were taken on these, all with unanimous affirmative votes.
- **Minute Man Vocational School:** Tony Lionetta and Charlie Foskett gave a brief update to the CPC on the progress of program to make MSBA sponsored infrastructure improvements at Minute Man. MM is proceeding to select an OPM per MSBA requirements. There are many uncertainties ranging from the level of enrollment (375 or 800), in district vs. out of district communities and their various positions (political and otherwise), MSBA's position, and so on. These uncertainties need to be addressed as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary costs and effort. Arlington needs to demonstrate leadership and actively steer the process given our size / stake in the school.
- **Kindergarten:** Diane Johnson reported on the School Department's plan to provide free all day Kindergarten. Currently, it offers a free half day with the other half of the day paid for by parents. Given recent changes in Chapter 70, Arlington can realize greater state reimbursement, if it were to provide free all day Kindergarten. Payments are being returned to families; however the School Department needs \$970k to cover the cost of Kindergarten this year. This money will come from the Town's free cash account. Beginning in FY2014, the Town will begin to receive an additional \$1.4 million (approx.) in Chapter 70 funds. The net difference between the additional Chapter 70 funds and the cost of offsetting Kindergarten fees will be deposited into the Override Stabilization Fund. Also, Arlington will have a free all day kindergarten. It is anticipated that this program will be in effect for at least 5 years.
- **Future Meeting Topics:**

Maintenance Program: Diane Johnson noted a "SchoolDude" Software package that could be used to assist in the programming of improvements. Barbara Thornton will report on the status of the maintenance program at the next meeting.

Reports: Andrew Flanagan will provide copies of the Five Year Plan and a report on outstanding Capital plan balances to CPC members. Charlie Foskett also requested that he distribute a presentation that he made to FinCon.

Roads/Sidewalks: Charlie Foskett noted concern over the condition of this infrastructure and asked Tony Lionetta and Paul Olsen to look into this as part of upcoming discussions with DPW. Andrew Flanagan noted that the consultant has recently updated the pavement management program with new conditional information.

Water / Sewer Rates: Rates are projected to increase significantly given the increase of MWRA rates, as well as from the new stormwater regulations

- **Next meeting:** September 27, 2012

Adjournment

